

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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TAGS: PFOR, UR, US

SUBJ: SOVIET MEDIA REACTION TO PRESIDENT FORD

REF: STATE 174699

1. SUMMARY. SOVIET MEDIA REPORTED FACTUALLY ON PRESIDENT FORD'S FIRST DAY IN OFFICE AND STATEMENTS ON CONTINUITY OF US FOREIGN POLICY. UNSIGNED PRAVDA ARTICLE ON SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS STRESSED OBJECTIVE BASES OF DETENTE AND WELCOMED AMERICAN
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STATEMENTS OF ASSURANCE, BUT SENATOR PELL WAS CITED ON CONTINUED

EXISTENCE OF FAMILIAR US ENEMIES OF DETENTE. PRAVDA WEEKLY REVIEW BY V. KORIONOV NOTED BRIEFLY THAT CERTAIN CIRCLES IN US USED WATERGATE AFFAIR TO QUESTION THE SUCCESSES OF DETENTE. TV SHOW ON PRESIDENTIAL ACCESSION BY TASS DIRECTOR ZAMYATIN AND V. ZORIN STRESSED CONTINUITY STATEMENTS BY PRESIDENT FORD, AND ZAMYATIN SPOKE STRONGLY ON NEED TO OBSERVE SUMMIT AGREEMENTS, ESPECIALLY IN WEAPONS FIELD AND PREVENTION OF NUCLEAR WAR. ZAMYATIN ALSO GAVE BRIEF BUT SLANTED VIEW OF PUBLIC AND POLITICAL PRESSURES EXERTED AGAINST PRESIDENT NIXON. PODGORNY'S TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT FORD FRONT-PAGED IN PRESS AS WAS AMBASSADOR STOESEL'S MEETING WITH POLITBURO MEMBER KIRILENKO.

2. PRAVDA ON AUGUST 11 REPORTED WASHINGTON EVENTS OF SATURDAY IN TERSE FACTURAL MANNER. PRESS SECRETARY TER HORST'S REMARKS ON PRESIDENT'S AND THE SECRETARY'S MEETINGS WITH AMBASSADORS AND THEIR STRESS ON CONTINUITY AND BIPARTISAN SUPPORT OF US FOREIGN POLICY WERE UNDERLINED. CHARGE' VORONTSOV'S INCLUSION IN MEETINGS WAS REPORTED IN OBVIOUS REASSURANCE TO SOVIET READERS. USA CP LEADER GUS HALL'S PRESS CONFERENCE AT WHICH HE WELCOMED CONTINUITY STATEMENT OF PRESIDENT FORD WAS ALSO REPORTED.

3. MAJOR UNSIGNED ARTICLE ON PAGE 4 COVERED SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS AND MADE POINT THAT CHANGE OF PRESIDENTS WAS INTERNAL AMERICAN AFFAIR BUT SUBJECT WAS MATTER OF IMPORTANCE TO FOREIGN COMMUNITY WHICH IS VITALLY INTERESTED IN COURSE OF SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS. NEW COURSE RESTS ON OBJECTIVE CONDITIONS AND IS MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS, AND SOVIET PUBLIC WELCOMED STATEMENTS OF PRESIDENT FORD, CONGRESSIONAL FIGURES, AND BUSINESS LEADERS IN FAVOR OF CONTINUATION OF DETENTE POLICY. ARTICLE NOTES BIPARTISAN SUPPORT BY LEADING FIGURES AS WELL AS LARGE MAJORITY OF US PUBLIC ACCORDING TO LATEST POLLS.

4. WARNING THAT OPPONENTS TO DETENTE STILL EXIST IN US APPEARS IN RESUME OF SENATOR PELL'S NYT ARTICLE OF AUGUST 9. THE "CERTAIN CIRCLES" INCLUDE THE FAMILIAR CAST OF THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX AND THEIR CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORTERS, THE AFL-CIO LEADERSHIP, AND ZIONISTS. PRAVDA CLOSED WITH EXHORTATION ON NEED TO OBSERVE SUMMIT AGREEMENTS.

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5. SOVIETS HAVE NOT FULLY EXPLAINED THE WATERGATE AFFAIR TO THEIR PUBLIC, BUT HAVE UNTIL RECENTLY FREQUENTLY CITED IT AS BEING USED AGAINST PRESIDENT NIXON FOR THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE OF OPPOSING SOVIET-AMERICAN DETENTE. THIS VIEW REAPPEARS BRIEFLY IN V. KORIONOV'S WEEKLY REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL EVENTS IN PRAVDA. KORIONOV NOTES THAT CERTAIN CIRCLES IN THE US WERE NOT ABOVE USING THE WATERGATE AFFAIR TO QUESTION THE SUCCESSES OF DETENTE AND THE POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT OF SOVIET-

AMERICAN RELATIONS. (COMMENT: THIS OBSERVATION IS NOT DEVELOPED HERE BUT HAS BEEN UNDER THE SURFACE OF MANY RECENT SOVIET ANALYSES OF AMERICAN POLITICAL LIFE.)

6. A PRIME-TIME HALF-HOUR TV SHOW ON THE PRESIDENTIAL ACCESSION FEATURED TASS GENERAL DIRECTOR L.M. ZAMYATIN AND TV POLITICAL COMMENTATOR V. ZORIN ON AUGUST 10. THE CAUSES FOR PRESIDENT NIXON'S RESIGNATION WERE NOT EXPLORED, BUT ZAMYATIN STRESSED FROM HIS PERSONAL EXPERIENCE DURING RECENT US TRIP THE PARTISAN NATURE OF PUBLIC PRESSURES BROUGHT AGAINST PRESIDENT NIXON. HE SAID THAT THE 1972 ELECTION STRUGGLE WAS CONTINUED AFTER THE ELECTION WHEN THE PRESIDENT FACED A DEMOCRATICALLY-CONTROLLED CONGRESS, AND HE ACCUSED THE MEDIA OF WAGING AN ANTI-NIXON CAMPAIGN. ZORIN UNSUCCESSFULLY ATTEMPTED TO INTRODUCE OTHER FACTORS, BUT THE PROGRAM WAS DOMINATED BY ZAMYATIN WHO REASSURED THE AUDIENCE WITH STATEMENTS BY PRESIDENT FORD AND THE SECRETARY ON CONTINUITY AND BIPARTISAN NATURE OF US DETENTE POLICY. ZAMYATIN SPOKE MOST STRONGLY IN CLOSING THIRD OF PROGRAM ON IMPORTANCE OF SUMMIT DOCUMENTS, ESPECIALLY IN CURBING NUCLEAR WAR. COMMENT: ZAMYATIN'S VEHEMENCE ON THIS POINT SUGGESTS SOME NERVOUSNESS OVER NEW ADMINISTRATIONS ATTITUDE AND HE MAY BE REACTING TO SOME CALLS IN US FOR A NEW APPROACH TO WEAPONS AGREEMENT. (TAPE OF BROADCAST BEING POUCHED TO DEPARTMENT.)

7. PODGORNYY'S TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT FORD WELCOMING HIS AUGUST 9 STATEMENT IS CARRIED BY ALL MEDIA AS IS BRIEF ACCOUNT OF AMBASSADOR STOESSEL'S SATURDAY MEETING WITH POLITBURO MEMBER KIRILENKO. CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE TWO REPORTED AS BEARING "BUSINESS-LIKE CONSTRUCTIVE CHARACTER."

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